

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

SITUATION REPORT # 19

1400 Hours October 26, 2005

New Information in Bold Italics

Next Conference Call is scheduled for Friday, October 28, 2005, 0930 hours

Information for Situation Report should be submitted to the VEOC no later than 1200 hours daily

WEATHER

Forecast:

Southwest VA: Mostly cloudy, High temperatures upper 40s to lower 50s, NW winds 5 to 10 MPH. Tonight - Partly cloudy, Patchy frost after midnight, Low temperatures in lower 30s, NW winds 10 MPH or less. 27 Oct - Partly cloudy, Patchy frost in the morning, High temperatures in upper 40s to lower 50s, Low temperatures lower 30s, NW winds 10 MPH or less.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation:

The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

State of Emergency:

On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage. Executive Order 99 (2005) was amended to include an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap.

Local Situation:

Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

STATE AGENCIES

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

The new Region Four Coordinator will meet with local personal during the later part of this week. The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies, and is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies.

VEOC is coordinating visit by Secretary Marshall to Big Stone Gap tomorrow at 10:00 am.

Water Conservation fliers sent home with primary school students yesterday and are available for people paying their water bills.

Two Appalachian backup wells still not operational, expect them to be ready the first of next week.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Dr. Sue Cantrell, will be the State point of contact through the end of this week. Gastrointestinal illnesses are being closely monitored for any outbreaks. Currently no abnormalities have been detected.

Water distribution to special needs on medically restricted extremely low sodium diets to continue.

Assure school administration/parents that no indication that chickenpox cases are related to water issues in BSG.

VDH will monitor food establishment's compliance with plans, and will monitor results of on going water tests.

Clinch Haven Farms well is being chlorinated as a potential water source.

***Water distribution to general public has ceased except for those who are still receiving water for low sodium intake.
All boil water notices have been lifted.
All holding tanks and storage areas at the water treatment plant are full.***

Virginia National Guard (VNG)

The VNG continues distribution and blivet support mission. Eleven blivets are placed at the following locations: one at each of the three public schools, one at the Hospital, one at the Nursing Home, one serving the community college/DMME, one at the Special Needs Shelter, two supporting the Portable Water Processing Plants, and two supporting the Powell River Cave #1 pumping operation. No longer conducting bottled water distribution. Sixteen soldiers remain on mission.

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

The DEQ reported that flow in the Powell River has almost doubled in the last 48 hours.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The VDOC is refilling blivets daily.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

The VDOT has four message boards in the Big Stone Gap area with ***plans to change the messages on the boards every three days so that members of the community do not become complacent.***

A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

Department of General Services/Consolidated Labs

DGS/CL is continuing to test water samples.

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

The VDOF has signs in place notifying residents of the burn ban.

Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy (DMME)

The DMME reported that the Powell River Cave #1 receives 90-95% of its water from the Powell River and once the reservoir is empty the cave will dry up.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Received good test results on the connection between Big Stone Gap and the Town of Appalachia. Connection is ready for use when needed. This resource will be brought into use at such time as the reservoir's supply is completely depleted. In addition, testing of Appalachia back up wells, which are being reconnected to that water system, is underway. Five additional potential sources of water have been identified.

The Cracker Neck area, which is east of Big Stone Gap, is of concern. A pump is on order to deliver water into the system and will arrive on Friday, October 28, 2005. Interim measures are being contemplated.

Permanent connection is complete from the Norton/ Big Stone Gap water line. The system is providing 100,000 gallon per day and efforts to increase the flow is underway.

Both portable plants 1 & 2 are on line producing 900,000 gallons per day effective October 24, 2005.

The Town of Big Stone Gap anticipates activation of another pump by Friday, October 28, 2005 that will return the water overflow to the water treatment plant. Long-term conservation measures will remain in effect.

Samples taken from spring above Cave #1 and Chandler Spring delivered to the lab for analysis. Samples are to be taken from Bloomer Spring and Exeter Mine today.